



Randolph County Historic Landmark Preservation Commission

204 East Academy St. ♦ P.O. Box 771 ♦ Asheboro, North Carolina 27204

January 28, 2009

The Randolph County Historic Landmark Preservation Commission (HLPC) met in the County Commissioners Meeting Room of the County Office Building at 725 McDowell Road, Asheboro, NC, and the meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

Members present were Hal Johnson, Fran Andrews, Bill Johnson, Warren Dixon, Mac Whatley, Bill Ivey, Lynne Qualls, and Robyn Hankins. Robby Davis was absent

Approval of Minutes from December 10, 2008

On a motion of Qualls, seconded by Hankins, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of December 10, 2008, as presented.

Request from the Randolph County Commissioners

County Manager Richard Wells thanked the Commission for the designation of the 1909 Courthouse and is now requesting on behalf of the Randolph County Commissioners that the Old County Home be designated as a historical landmark. Mr. Wells stated the property is located on South Fayetteville Street and that it was the second facility to serve as the County Home. He continued with some history of the County Home. Indigent relief was considered a function of local county government according to the constitution of 1777, when "An Act Providing for the Support of the Poor" was passed by the General Assembly. The County purchased this property in the early 1900's and moved 15 white and five colored from the previous home into the new County Home in May 1922. It was remodeled in 1961.

Mr. Wells said that the family that ran the home for decades wishes to purchase the property. Because it is prime property on Fayetteville Street, others have also expressed interest in purchasing the property. It is currently used for surplus property storage by County departments. He stated that the County Commissioners would like to see this property renovated, restored and back on the tax books. The request of designation is being made in order to protect the historical property and keep it from ever being torn down. Mr. Wells said that once an offer to purchase is received due process will be followed pursuant to NC General Statutes regarding publications of the bids and upset bid opportunities for other interested parties. If Therapeutic Alternatives wins the bid, they plan to renovate the facility into their main office and employ around 40 people. Mr. Wells also spoke of visits he made to the home when he was in school and worked part time at the Library.

Chairman Johnson reminded the HLPC that they should keep in mind the criteria outlined in the Ordinance that is used in determining whether or not a particular property can be considered as a local landmark. He said that heritage and architecture would be positive examples of the Old County Rest Home meeting the criteria. Chairman Johnson stated this is important for the Commission to note, because there may be times when a property is recommended for landmark consideration but may not meet the criteria of the Ordinance, and the Commission may not approve landmark designation.

Mr. Whatley stated that from an architectural standpoint, the 1922 county home is an interesting example of a transition from the boxy turn-of-the-century Craftsman or "American Foursquare" style of residential design, to the Bungalow style. The plan of the complex of buildings is the familiar service wing-and-hyphen "plantation house" design that goes all the way back to English Baroque

examples, and was first seen in America in the Governor's Palace in Williamsburg, Va. He also feels that there was a psychological message in the plantation style giving a lift of importance to the residents.

Mr. Wells thanked the Commission and hoped to see it restored to its glory.

On a motion of B. Johnson, seconded by Andrews, the Commission voted unanimously to begin the landmark designation process for the Old County Home and set a Public Hearing for March 25, 2009 at 2:00 p.m. in the Commissioner's Meeting Room at the Randolph County Administrative Office building.

New Landmark Designations

1. Sandy Creek Primitive Baptist Church

Chairman Johnson welcomed Elder Gene Hogan and Hal Younts to the meeting. They represent the Sandy Creek Primitive Baptist Church. Elder Gene Hogan spoke on behalf of the church to correct some information on the history of the church. He stated that Baptist history goes back to the beginning of Christ and the teachings of the Bible. He continued by saying that they preach and teach based on what the King James version of the scriptures say in 1 Corinthians 14:34 *"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but [they are commanded] to be under obedience, as also saith the law."* Elder Hogan stated that they have no problem with any other history in the report by Mr. Dixon, but asked that the information that was included that women preached in the church be removed.

Mr. Ivey asked Elder Hogan and Mr. Younts if they knew if the statement about blacks worshiping with whites was a true statement. They replied that was what they had always heard and that the blacks, which most likely were slaves, sat in the balcony. Mr. Ivey recalled times he attended the log church with his relatives.

Mr. Ivey and Mr. Whatley commended Mr. Younts for his restoration efforts with the original log church and hoped that it would always be maintained. Elder Hogan added he was even surprised by the number of people who travel out of their way to visit the old church. Mr. Ivey stated that if he had to choose one landmark on a national level in Randolph County, it would be this one.

Mr. Younts presented some additional printed historical documentation that could be included with the application.

Chairman Johnson asked its significance to be stated for the record. Mr. Whatley said that its significance was historical, religious and architecturally the oldest church still standing in the County. He also recommended that on the application a statement of recommendation to the National Parks Service that this site be put on a study list for the National Registry.

On a motion of Whatley, seconded by Dixon, the Commission voted unanimously to begin the landmark designation process for Sandy Creek Primitive Baptist Church and set a Public Hearing for February 25, 2009 at 2:00 p.m.

Chairman Johnson thanked Elder Hogan and Mr. Younts again for their presence and input.

2. Franklinsville Manufacturing Company (Franklin'sville was the original name... after Jesse Franklin) (used 1851 to 1923)

Chairman Johnson continued with the Franklinsville Manufacturing Company as the second designation for discussion at this meeting and asked Mr. Whatley to elaborate.

Mr. Whatley stated that this designation has also been known as Randolph Mills #1 (1923-1978), the “Upper Mill” and Randolph Manufacturing Company (1838-1851).

- In 1801 Morris Gristmill was established and a dam and power canals built on Deep River
- In 1820, Christian Morris sold his gristmill to Elisha Coffin.
- Coffin, with partners Henry B. Elliott of Cedar Falls, John Miller, and Henry Kivett, built a cotton mill on the property in 1838- 2nd in Randolph and one of the very first in NC.
- Mr. Coffin was the Justice of the Peace / County Commissioner from 1818-1850. His factory was meant to provide jobs for widows and the poor, and to provide an alternative investment to slave-owning.
- Steam engines were added in 1884, and electricity was made in 1888; in 1901, the dam was rebuilt and a new water wheel added.
- Pro-slavery stockholders took over in the late 1840s, and in March of 1851, this mill saw the first labor strike in NC over employees who were fired for pro-abolition activities.
- That mill burned on April 18, 1851 but was rebuilt and sold to the Cedar Falls Manufacturing Company.
- The combined “Cedar Falls Company” wove cloth and paid women to cut and sew “shirts and drawers” (underwear) under military contract during the war.
- The mill sold twice in the mid 1870s to the Randleman Manufacturing Company and then to Parks and Moffitt, who formed the Franklinsville Manufacturing Company.
- In 1882, the Railroad came through the property.
- From 1870 to 1915, the mill wove “seamless” cotton flour and feed bags; after 1915, it wove cotton sheeting, flannel and unbleached denim.
- In 1923, both this mill and the nearby “Lower” mill were purchased by John W. Clark and his Randolph Mills corporation.
- In 1935, the dam was again remodeled and a hydroelectric generating plant was built nearby. The 20-foot high dam is still used by Bill Lee of Asheboro as a hydroelectric plant.
- The mill closed in December 1977 when Randolph Mills entered bankruptcy.
- The property is now owned by the Randolph Heritage Conservancy, Inc., a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. It is already exempt from county and municipal property taxes.

Mr. Whatley stated that there were five cotton factories in Randolph County before the Civil War; there were also five in Alamance County and eight in Cumberland, but only those in Randolph survived into the 20th Century.

Mr. Whatley stated that the historical significance of this property is that it is one of the oldest cotton mills in NC, the second oldest standing in the state and one of the oldest in the South.

On a motion of Andrews, seconded by Hankins, the Commission voted unanimously to begin the landmark designation process for the Franklinsville Manufacturing Company, and set a Public Hearing for February 25, 2009 at 2:00 p.m.

Discussion of Additional Landmarks for Study List

During the discussion among members regarding which potential landmarks to add to the study list, Ms. Andrews suggested the George Craven house and Ms. Hankins suggested the Jonathan Harper house. Chairman Johnson mentioned the Mount Shepherd pottery site and Mr. Ivey suggested the Female Academy. Mr. Bill Johnson mentioned that Native American history should not be forgotten as the Commission goes forward. No action was taken.

Update on the Status of the Inter-Local Agreements

Chairman Johnson stated that Seagrove has signed the inter-local agreement.

Update on Standard Signage

Chairman Johnson presented a new draft of the standard signage which was created with the suggestions given at previous meetings. The Commission stated the named designation font should be larger. Mr. Ivey feels that the font for who designated the landmark was still too large, the municipality name should be removed and list only “Designated by Historic Landmark Preservation Commission.” Chairman Johnson will present revisions at the February meeting.

On a motion of Ivey, seconded by Andrews the Commission voted unanimously to use the layout presented, amending the named designation to a larger font, specifying the “designated by” as only The Historic Landmark Preservation Commission, and it being in a smaller font.

Adjournment

On a motion of Andrews, seconded by Whatley, the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn at 3:53 p.m.

Hal Johnson, Chairman

Amanda W. Varner, Deputy Clerk
Randolph County Board of Commissioners
Clerk to the HLPC